Refinery Events

April 12, 2013—April 18, 2013

The following events were obtained from the Department of Energy (DOE) website:

HollyFrontier Announces 70,000 b/d Crude Oil Rail Project to Serve Its New Mexico Refineries

HollyFrontier Corp. said Thursday that it is planning to construct a rail facility with an initial capacity of 70,000 b/d, enabling crude oil loading and unloading near its Artesia and/or Lovington, New Mexico refining facilities. The rail project will be connected to HollyFrontier's crude oil pipeline transportation system in southeastern New Mexico and is expected to be completed by early 2014.
http://investor.hollyfrontier.com/releasedetail.cfm?ReleaseID=756143. Posted to DOE website 4-12-13.

Phillips 66 Reports Unplanned Unit Shutdown at Its 120,000 b/d Rodeo, California Refinery April 11

Phillips 66 reported flaring due to an unplanned shutdown of an unspecified unit at its Rodeo, California refinery, according to a filing released by the Contra Costa Health Services. The filing indicated that the "excessive flaring" was expected to last for six hours.
http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-04-11/california-gasoline-premium-gains-as-bp-flares-plant-unit-shuts.html Posted to DOE website 4-12-13.

Short Circuit at Entergy Substation Cuts Power to Three Port Arthur, Texas Refineries, Causing Numerous Operational Upsets and Emissions April 14

Entergy Corp. reported an apparent short circuit at the Kolbs substation in Port Arthur, Texas around 9:30 a.m. local time Sunday morning cut power to 17,900 of its customers in the area, including local refineries operated by Valero Energy Corp., Motiva Enterprises, and Total Petrochemicals USA Inc. Entergy fully restored power to its affected customers by 1:00 p.m. Sunday. Motiva's 600,000 b/d Port Arthur refinery reported the incident caused a plant-wide power failure and resulted in numerous operational upsets and emissions from an alkylation unit, catalytic reforming units 4 and 5, and delayed coking units 1 and 2, according to a filing with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). Energy intelligence service Genscape reported Motiva's 325,000 b/d crude distillation unit was shut, along with a 88,000 b/d fluidic catalytic cracking unit and a 95,000 b/d coker. Operators began restart procedures early on Monday morning, according to sources familiar with operations. Total reported multiple units at its 232,000 b/d Port Arthur refinery experienced operational upsets, causing excess emissions from sulfur recovery units No. 1 and 3, a tail gas thermal oxidizer, and Unit 833, among other flares, and forcing operators to institute emergency shutdown procedures, according to a TCEQ filing. Total said the power failure also caused a fire at one of the refinery's vacuum distillation units; an onsite emergency response team extinguished the fire Sunday. Valero on Monday reported all units at its Port Arthur refinery were in operation except one of two crude units and one of two hydrocracking units, as operators continued restart procedures that had begun Sunday afternoon. A spokesman said it appeared there would be no material impact to production.
Reuters, 11:05 April 15, 2013
http://panews.com/local/x437163563/Power-out-in-parts-of-PA-refineries-flare
http://www11.tceq.state.tx.us/oce/eer/index.cfm?fuseaction=main.getDetails&target=181601
http://www11.tceq.state.tx.us/oce/eer/index.cfm?fuseaction=main.getDetails&target=181586
http://www11.tceq.state.tx.us/oce/eer/index.cfm?fuseaction=main.getDetails&target=181616
Posted to DOE website 4-15-13.

Phillips 66 Reports HCU Leak at Its 362,000 b/d Wood River, Illinois Refinery April 13

Phillips 66 reported a leak of gas oil at a hydrocracker unit (HCU) at its Wood River refinery on Saturday, according to filings with the U.S. National Response Center and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency.
Reuters, 04:10 April 15, 2013
http://www.nrc.uscg.mil/reports/rwservlet?standard_web+inc_seq=1043877 Posted to DOE website 4-15-13.

Unspecified Breakdown Causes Flaring at Phillip 66's 139,000 b/d Wilmington, California Refinery April 13

Phillips 66 reported unplanned flaring due to a breakdown at its Wilmington refinery Saturday morning, according to a filing with the South Coast Air Quality Management District.
Reuters, 08:50 April 13, 2013. Posted to DOE website 4-15-13.

Update: Chevron Report on August 2012 Fire at Its Richmond, California Refinery Says the Company Failed to Properly Inspect All Corrosion-Prone Pipes

Chevron Corp. on Friday released a report on its investigation into the cause of an August 6, 2012 leak that led to a massive fire at its Richmond refinery. The report indicates the company failed to properly document tests of a corroded pipe near the one that failed and caused the fire, and the oversight led to a failure to inspect all corrosion prone pipes in the same area. Chevron's findings are similar to those of Federal and State investigators, who also found the company had failed to properly inspect the pipe that leaked despite finding corrosion in other pipes nearby. Operators said the company will improve its inspection procedures and that they were inspecting every pipe in the facility.
http://finance.yahoo.com/news/chevron-finds-failed-inspect-faulty-192613158.html Posted to DOE website 4-15-13.

CVR Reports Flaring Due to Unplanned Repairs at Its 70,000 b/d Wynnewood, Oklahoma Refinery April 13

CVR Energy Inc. reported flaring at its Wynnewood refinery on Saturday was due to unplanned maintenance and repairs, according to a filing with the U.S. National Response Center.
http://www.nrc.uscg.mil/reports/rwservlet?standard_web+inc_seq=1043858 Posted to DOE website 4-15-13.

Western Refining Reports Normal Operations at Its 122,000 b/d El Paso, Texas Refinery After Fuel Gas System Snag April 11

Western Refining Inc. reported its El Paso refinery was operating normally Thursday evening after the fuel gas system became unbalanced and caused operational problems at the facility earlier that day, according to a filing with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. The operational upset led to flaring of fuel gas at the refinery.
http://www11.tceq.state.tx.us/oce/eer/index.cfm?fuseaction=main.getDetails&target=181553
Posted to DOE website 4-15-13.

Update: Chevron Delays Restarting CDU at Its 245,271 b/d Richmond, California Refinery Until August 20 – Source

Chevron Corp. has delayed restarting a crude distillation unit (CDU) at its Richmond refinery, according to a source familiar with operations. The plant's only crude unit has been shut since a fire on August 6, 2012, and had been expected to restart last week. The unit is now scheduled to restart April 20. The refinery has been producing motor fuels at about 50 percent of capacity during repairs.
http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-04-15/san-francisco-gasoline-premium-widens-as-chevron-restartdelayed.html?cmpid=yhoo Posted to DOE website 4-16-13.

Update: Chemical Safety Board Calls for Tougher Rules for Refineries in Wake of August 2012 Fire at Chevron's Richmond, California Refinery

The U.S. Chemical Safety Board (CSB) on Monday released an interim investigative report on the August 6, 2012 fire at Chevron's Richmond refinery, which was caused by a corroded pipe that failed and released a vapor cloud. The board's investigation found that Chevron's own technical staff made at least six recommendations since 2002 to increase inspections or upgrade equipment in the crude distillation unit containing the 1970s-era pipe that eventually failed. The board recommended that the City of Richmond and Contra Costa County strengthen process safety programs over refineries under their jurisdiction; and that Federal, State, and local worker safety and environmental protection agencies conduct joint inspections of refineries and chemical plants. It also recommended those agencies participate in the new safety regulation program recommended for California. Chevron said it was working with the CSB to make changes to its process hazard analysis program, and that it will check for ongoing damage to pipes and equipment at its U.S. refineries and improve its inspection procedures.

Reuters, 18:06 April 15, 2013
http://finance.yahoo.com/news/board-calls-tougher-rules-refineries-201456379.html
http://www.csb.gov/assets/1/16/Draft_Report_for_Public_Comment.pdf
http://www.csb.gov/csb-announces-april-19-public-meeting-in-richmond-california/
Posted to DOE website 4-16-13.

Update: Motiva Says Restart Procedures at Its 600,000 b/d Port Arthur, Texas Refinery to Take 'Several Days'

Motiva Enterprises reported it was in the early process of preparing units for restart at its Port Arthur refinery on Monday, and that restart procedures would take several days to complete following an unexpected loss of power Sunday from its utility provider Entergy Corp. A short circuit at Entergy's Kolbs substation in Port Arthur Sunday morning cut power to thousands of customers in the area, including local refineries operated by Motiva, Valero Energy Corp., and Total Petrochemicals USA Inc. All three of these refineries reported operational upsets and emissions resulting from the incident, and all were working to restart units beginning Sunday and Monday.
Reuters, 18:56 April 15, 2013
http://www.foxbusiness.com/news/2013/04/16/shell-motiva-port-arthur-refinery-restart-to-take-several-days/
Posted to DOE website 4-16-13.

Chalmette Refining Isolates Exchanger Due to Lube Oil Leak at Its 192,500 b/d Chalmette, Louisiana Refinery April 15

Chalmette Refining LLC isolated an exchanger after discovering a leak of lubricating oil at its Chalmette refinery on Monday, according to a filing with the U.S. National Response Center. Lubricating oil was found in the boundary of a unit, the filing said.
http://www.nrc.uscg.mil/reports/rwservlet?standard_web+inc_seq=1044066 Posted to DOE website 4-16-13.

Citgo Reports Propane Release from Leaking Pipeline Near Its 429,500 b/d Lake Charles, Louisiana Refinery April 15

Citgo Petroleum Corp. reported its was repairing a pin-hole leak on a pipeline that had caused the release of an unspecified quantity of propane mixture at Westlake, Louisiana, which borders Lake Charles, according to a filing with the U.S. National Response Center on Monday.
http://www.nrc.uscg.mil/reports/rwservlet?standard_web+inc_seq=1044053 Posted to DOE website 4-16-13.

Compressor Trip Causes Sulfur Dioxide Release at Phillips 66's 362,000 b/d Wood River, Illinois Refinery April 15

Phillips 66 reported a compressor tripped offline at its Wood River refinery on Monday, causing a release of sulfur dioxide, according to a filing with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency.
Reuters, 04:00 April 16, 2013 Posted to DOE website 4-16-13.

Fire Breaks Out in Hydrotreater at ExxonMobil's 344,500 b/d Beaumont, Texas Refinery April 17, Injures 12

ExxonMobil Corp. said Wednesday that 12 workers were injured when a fire broke out within a hydrotreater process unit that was down for maintenance at its 344,500 b/d refinery in Beaumont, Texas. The hydrotreater removes harmful substances from feedstock so motor fuels that are produced comply with federal environmental regulations. The company said the fire was quickly contained and it is investigating the cause.
http://news.yahoo.com/exxon-puts-fire-process-unit-beaumont-texas-refinery-171852590.html
http://abclocal.go.com/ktrk/story?section=news/local&id=9068678 Posted to DOE website 4-17-13.

Phillips 66 Resumes Normal Operations at Its 247,000 b/d Sweeny, Texas Refinery after Steam Loss Affects Several Units April 16

Phillips 66 reported that several units at its Sweeny refinery shut down Tuesday morning following a loss of most of the plant's steam supply, according to a filing with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. The steam loss was caused by an interruption in the natural gas supply to the adjacent cogeneration unit, which resulted in the

shutdown of all the cogeneration turbines operating at the time. Operators were investigating the cause of the natural gas supply disruption. Following the loss of most steam, the refinery followed established steam shedding procedures and shut certain units down in a safe and controlled manner, which resulted in flaring. A backup boiler provided sufficient steam to allow some units to continue to operate. The natural gas supply to the cogeneration turbines was restored, and refining units re-started in a sequence to minimize emissions. Operators reported the refinery had resumed normal operations by Wednesday morning.
Reuters, 09:44 April 17, 2013
http://www11.tceq.state.tx.us/oce/eer/index.cfm?fuseaction=main.getDetails&target=181782
http://www.nrc.uscg.mil/reports/rwservlet?standard_web+inc_seq=1044113 Posted to DOE website 4-18-13.

Update: Valero Says All Units Restarted, Nearing Planned Rates at Its 310,000 b/d Port Arthur, Texas Refinery by April 16 after Sunday's Power Loss

Valero Energy Corp. said all units at its Port Arthur refinery had returned to production and were nearing planned rates by Tuesday afternoon following an unexpected loss of power Sunday from its utility provider Entergy Corp. Operators had begun restarting units at the refinery after power was restored shortly after the interruption occurred Sunday morning.
Reuters, 12:13 April 16, 2013. Posted to DOE website 4-18-13.

Alon Cuts FCCU Feed to Minimize Emissions During Flue Gas Line Repairs at Its 67,000 b/d Big Spring, Texas Refinery April 17

Alon USA Holdings reported emissions at its Big Spring refinery Wednesday as operators repaired a flue gas line, according to a filing with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Operators reported emissions from the carbon dioxide (CO) boiler, the CO boiler stack, the electrostatic precipitator (ESP) regenerator, the ESP stack, and the fluid catalytic cracking unit (FCCU). Operators cut charge on the FCCU to minimize emissions.
http://www11.tceq.state.tx.us/oce/eer/index.cfm?fuseaction=main.getDetails&target=181807
Posted to DOE website 4-18-13.

Loose Flange Causes Hydrogen Fluoride Release from Alkylation Unit at Chalmette Refining's 192,500 b/d Chalmette, Louisiana Refinery April 17

Chalmette Refining LLC reported a loose flange at the top of a vessel caused a release of hydrogen fluoride from an alkylation unit at its Chalmette refinery Wednesday, according to a filing with the U.S. National Response Center.
http://www.nrc.uscg.mil/reports/rwservlet?standard_web+inc_seq=1044183 Posted to DOE website 4-18-13.

Phillips 66 to Restart Hydrocracker after Pump Repairs at Its 120,000 b/d Rodeo, California Refinery by April 18 – Source

http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-04-17/san-francisco-gasoline-slips-from-six-month-high-on-unitstarts.html?cmpid=yhoo Posted to DOE website 4-18-13.